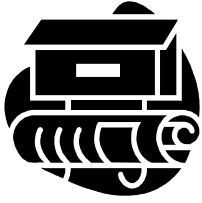


# Hempland Lane-Heworth Allotment Association

## Newsletter Autumn 2008



## Hot from the Hut!

### Bring out your pumpkins!!

There could be some giants lurking on the allotments after all the wet weather we have had this summer so wheel them along for judging which will take place on SUNDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER at 11.30am at the hut. The shop will be open and there will be a barbecue (weather permitting) so bring something to sizzle if you want to snack. Prizes will be awarded for the top 3 monsters. We will be mowing and raking on the wetland wildlife area on that day as well and any helpers will be very welcome: please bring a rake!

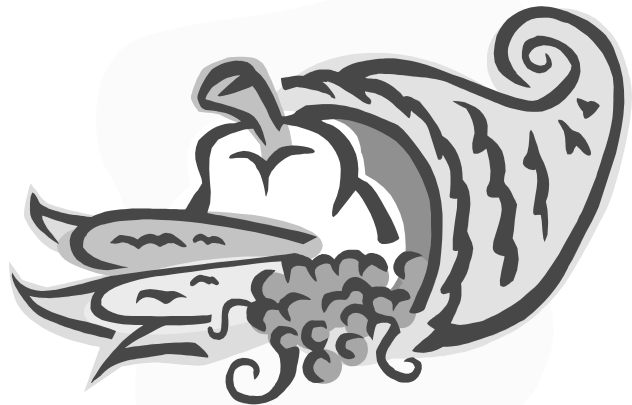


### Woodchips

The council tree team have kindly been leaving us supplies of woodchips next to the composting toilet. These don't arrive on a regular basis but again, please help yourselves if the pile looks to be getting high.

### Shop talk

The shop is still in full swing, selling gardening supplies and surplus produce every Sunday from 10am to 12 noon. Fruit, vegetable, jam and pickle donations are very welcome. The last day of opening will be Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October. Thanks to all allotment association members for their custom this year.



### Manure

Deliveries of manure have been temporarily stopped until the present pile has gone so that we can construct a contained bay to prevent it spreading and leaking liquid manure out on to the path. We need to get the pile reduced as quickly as possible so help yourselves while stocks last! Donations may be made at the hut or to any committee member.

## Rats

Have been a real problem on site this year (to add to our pigeon, slug and caterpillar woes). Just a reminder concerning the advice from the Allotment Officer about taking care with rat poison: please don't leave bait where it can be taken by birds, hedgehogs, cats or dogs. Be safe: call the Allotments Office and let the Pest Control Officer sort out any rat problems for you free of charge!



## Nasty weeds

From one pest problem to another! Soft, annual weeds can easily be hoed off and composted but the roots of persistent, perennial weed varieties such as couch grass, dock, dandelion, bindweed and the dreaded mare's tail are a different matter! You don't necessarily have to put these in the green skip or in your green wheely bin. Their roots go down deep and can bring up trace nutrients which can get exhausted in the topsoil so how can these goodies be captured and put back into your plot? Sara Robin of Scarcroft Allotments has published some tips in their newsletter which she has kindly let me pass on.

The black bag method. This works very well for couch grass. Use an old, thick plastic bag, an old compost bag is ideal. Put in your roots with some soil and leave until everything has broken down. This may take a year or two but you will get good compost in the end.

The separate compost heap. Put all your nasties into a separate compost bin and empty it only every two or three years. This again makes fantastic compost: add some water to the pile if it looks a bit dry.

Soaking in water. Works well with nettles and Sara is currently experimenting with mare's tail. When all is rotted it makes excellent liquid manure for use on crops or as an activator in the compost heap.

Drying in the sun. (OK, well maybe not this year!) Dandelions and docks seem to break down well in a normal compost heap after drying out on the ground for some time.

Finally, don't put weed seeds or couch grass roots into your normal compost heap.

If anyone has advice to share on composting (or any other aspect of gardening), please share them via the next newsletter and we will pass your ideas back to Sara.

### King's seed catalogues

The 2009 catalogues are available: you may collect your copy from the shop. As usual there is a good choice of vegetable and flower varieties and prices are very reasonable.



### Fencing

Some allotment association money has been spent on fencing a number of plots recently. City of York Council financed the fencing along two sections of the public footpath earlier in the year and this will continue as more money becomes available.

### Probation Team programme

We are very pleased that Steve and the North Yorkshire Probation team are still able to help on the site. This autumn they will be continuing with their work on the area in front of the hut and strimming the footpaths. They will also be laying wood chips on wet paths as and when necessary.

### Bonfires and wildlife

If you must have a bonfire, and we know that some people just cannot resist, please check that there is no wildlife hibernating in the pile of rubbish before you start the fire. Better still, leave some logs and brushwood in the corner of your plot to provide a home for over wintering hedgehogs and other creatures.



### Skip date

We have asked for a skip for green waste to be on site from 10<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER.

# Autumn Wordsearch

H	H	S	M	I	E	R	L	E	A	V	E	S	Y	D
E	E	W	A	S	N	L	L	M	A	T	O	C	K	O
R	B	D	C	O	F	Y	S	K	E	O	T	R	U	G
E	D	H	G	S	N	D	T	E	R	I	F	N	O	B
O	A	I	B	E	E	E	I	C	L	L	K	I	U	F
C	E	S	C	S	H	E	O	R	A	N	G	E	T	A
T	L	H	L	A	F	O	T	A	B	N	N	M	D	N
O	A	M	O	E	A	S	G	A	S	C	G	U	A	E
B	N	A	U	R	S	A	M	A	C	Y	E	N	H	E
E	K	L	D	R	I	R	E	I	R	U	C	C	K	W
R	Y	A	S	D	A	J	E	N	Y	C	I	H	A	O
B	A	R	S	H	A	C	M	K	N	N	M	E	W	L
O	W	I	N	L	O	C	L	K	N	I	C	K	Y	L
S	H	A	R	V	E	S	T	I	X	O	Y	L	A	A
D	F	L	O	Y	D	P	O	O	C	H	C	R	Y	H

While away the rainy days with this Autumn wordsearch.

1. Harvest
2. Clouds
3. Mice
4. Halloween
5. Conkers
6. Hedgehog
7. October
8. Leaves
9. Bonfire
10. Orange

